'On the same page?' Marginalisation and positioning practices in intercultural teams

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A B S T R A C T

This study investigates participation problems in teams with mixed language proficiencies. Utilising an in-depth single case study approach and drawing on interactional data and interviews, it explores participation in team meetings. It takes a positioning theory approach, and analyses how the least proficient speaker is subtly positioned in various ways: as silent, different, difficult and incompetent. It argues that these positionings contribute to the marginalisation of his contributions in team meetings and in effectively silencing him and that this occurred through interactional patterns in which his contributions were a) ignored, b) dismissed outright and c) treated with only token interest. The paper ends by considering the range of factors, both interactional and attitudinal, that seem to have contributed to this silencing, including cultural stereotypes that seem to influence the dynamics of the interactions.

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1. Introduction

Intercultural teamwork has become an everyday occurrence in most universities and workplaces around the world. Yet problems in managing participation within these teams have been frequently observed and recorded (Spencer-Oatey and Xing, 2005; García and Cañado, 2005; Hinds et al., 2014; SanAntonio, 1987; Rogerson-Revell, 2008; Vigier and Spencer-Oatey, 2018). Team members with comparatively lower proficiency in the working language, independent of their expertise, are consistently reported to be less able to take turns and contribute to the teamwork from an equal position, leading to frustrations, anxiety and worries over losing face (Hinds et al., 2014), power inequalities in the team (García and Cañado, 2005) and a loss of trust towards the least proficient team member(s) (Tenzer et al., 2014). However, while we have some understanding of the negative consequences of this phenomenon, investigations into the actual interactions (rather than post-event reports) seem sparse (García and Cañado, 2005; Kassis-Henderson, 2005; Vigier, 2015), with researchers calling for more scholarly attention to this issue (Tenzer et al., 2014). To explore this further we have conducted an in-depth longitudinal single-case study into an intercultural team, in which mixed proficiency levels were present and reported as problematic by its members. However, despite there being several members who initially struggled with the working language, teammates only maintained a negative perception throughout the teamwork of one team member and reported him as 'a problem'.

In this paper, we therefore argue that language proficiency alone does not account for the participation challenges and consider key factors that seem to have contributed to the marginalisation of one team member beyond (perceptions of)

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language proficiency. We thus try to answer the questions: 1) How are relations in a linguistically diverse team managed?; 2) How are less proficient speakers engaged with in intercultural teamwork by their more fluent peers?; 3) Which factors contribute to their self- or other-imposed exclusion from the team discourse?

One of the goals of this paper is to go beyond discourses of language proficiency and to shed light on other aspects in intercultural communication that contribute to interactional marginalisation and to connect pragmatic research to discrimination and marginalisation of individuals.

2. Participation in intercultural teams

Communication in intercultural teams has repeatedly been reported as problematic, especially regarding participation rates and silences by less-proficient team members. This has been reported in student teams (e.g. Turner, 2009; Volet and Ang, 2012) and workplace teams (Spencer-Oatey and Xing, 2005; García and Cañado, 2005; Hinds et al., 2014; Kassis-Henderson, 2005; SanAntonio, 1987; Vigier and Spencer-Oatey, 2018), and even at the highest management levels (Piekkari et al., 2015). In all these studies, less proficient team members were consistently found to speak less frequently in team meetings than their more fluent counterparts, and language proficiency was often used to explain this phenomenon.

Most of these studies have, however, pointed to issues resulting from people's perceptions of a lack of language proficiency, instead of actual communication problems. As a case in point, problems tended to be reported in teams where proficiency levels were mixed (Tenzer and Pudelko, 2017; Tenzer et al., 2014), suggesting that the problem lies more in the difference, not the proficiency itself. Team members who were seen as less proficient were also perceived as less competent (Tenzer et al., 2014), affecting team members' trust in them (Kassis-Henderson and Louhiala-Salminen, 2011; Tenzer et al., 2014). Interestingly, Tenzer et al. (2014) found that not only was ability-based trust lower compared with their more proficient peers, integrity-based trust was also affected. This suggests that the perceived lack of English might be processed as a character flaw, thus adding a moral dimension to not speaking English fluently, with less proficient speakers being held personally accountable.

Explanations for the differences in turn frequency are multisided. Some research suggests that differences in interactional patterns, especially in turn-taking practices, might contribute to differences in turn-taking frequencies (Aritz and Walker, 2010). Yet other research points to affective factors, such as high levels of anxiety over speaking up in meetings and about losing face (García and Cañado, 2005; Hinds et al., 2014; Tenzer et al., 2014). Hinds et al. (2014) report that this is not just due to anxiety over speaking the company language in front of others; they found people also had strong emotional reactions (stress, anxiety and frustration) to perceived power asymmetries. This is in line with García and Cañado (2005) study of power in multinational teams in which they conclude:

> What can be gleaned from the data obtained is that native speakers are at a clear advantage over the rest of the team members because they master not only the language, but also tone and other paralinguistic aspects, and they have a privileged position in discussions and debates, when participating in meetings […]. (p.98).

This suggests that staying silent in meetings can at least partially result from the less privileged power positions that less proficient speakers occupy, rather than just anxiety per se. Participation problems thus appear to be at least as much a relational problem as a linguistic one.

Even though speaking may be uncomfortable and perceived as face-threatening, staying silent in a team might also come at a steep price. Not only is it close to impossible to influence the project and gain ownership over it or build good relationships with colleagues, Spencer-Oatey and Xing (2005, p. 58) also point out that:

> People may experience evaluative reactions to the silence. They may feel a range of emotions, such as discomfort, bewilderment or irritation, and at the same time, they may form evaluative judgements of the 'silent' persons, such as that they are unfriendly or lacking in ideas.

Thus, staying silent might aggravate the situation even further. Yet, despite the number of studies that have identified problems with participation, in which less proficient speakers stay silent while more fluent speakers chat away, studies unpacking the factors contributing to these communicative breakdowns have been comparatively few. Most draw on interviews to identify the causes and consequences of participation problems in team meetings; a few others (e.g. Hinds et al., 2014; Vigier and Spencer-Oatey, 2018) have drawn on observations. Only very few, such as Poncini (2002) and Rogerson-Revell (2008), have analysed recorded meetings. However, Poncini had a different focus from our work (linguistic elements such as pronoun use and specialized lexis). Rogerson-Revell, like us, looked at participation and found that "there is a much higher proportion of inactive NonNative English Speakers (NNSE) in the meetings" (compared with Native English Speakers) (p.338). She calls for more research in the area in order to gain insights into reasons for this. Our study partly addresses this call. What seems to be very rare are studies taking a longitudinal, process view of multicultural teamwork, that explore the actual interactions occurring among members with varying language proficiencies and backgrounds and examining how participation is negotiated over time.

To address this research gap, we have conducted an in-depth longitudinal single-case study of an intercultural team, with mixed proficiency levels in which participation problems were frequently reported.

Meetings were by far the most frequent way the team interacted in order to advance the projects given to them and they were the setting in which all major decisions were taken and where relationships and power at the team level (but not

necessarily between two individual team members) tended to be negotiated and enacted. Meetings are pre-arranged interactions, often focused on specific goals and occurring in specific institutional contexts that affect and potentially restrain speaking rights (Asmuß and Svennevig, 2009).

In the context explored here, meetings tended to be relatively informal and while "task masters" were elected by the team for each separate project they worked on, there was no formal meeting chair with the task master fulfilling some of the role of a chair but usually in a very restrained fashion. Thus it was unusual for the chair to allocate turns to team members and turn-taking in meetings tended to rely mostly on self-selection and next-turn allocation (Asmuß and Svennevig, 2009; Sacks et al., 1974).

This is in contrast to a number of previous studies that featured meetings with a much more formalised interaction order (e.g. Rogerson-Revell, 2008). While formality in the turn-taking and topic order has previously been suggested as contributing to the relative silence of non-native speakers, the present study shows that other factors must also be contributing, as problematic power dynamics around language proficiencies emerged in the every-day workings of the team, leading to the almost complete silence of a team member − even though team meetings tended to be quite informal. These participation problems led to relational troubles affecting all team members. Yet, despite a recognition of these issues and widespread good intentions of addressing and improving the situation, the team did not achieve this even by the very end, making an exploration of some of the interactional and relational factors that have affected and precluded this all the more relevant.

3. Positioning in teamwork

Considering the relational dimension of the reported participation challenges, we take a relationally focused analytical approach to the data. Traditional relational focused analytical approaches in pragmatics such as politeness theory (e.g. Brown and Levinson, 1987; Locher and Watts, 2005) or rapport management (Spencer-Oatey, 2008) do not seem to account for the complex challenges that team members are reported to face. While there are clear face-threats on a number of occasions, we feel that greater insights for this data could be obtained by focusing on the interactional dynamics of participation. We therefore chose positioning theory as an analytical lens as it allows us to explore the complex relational web constructed in a team, with particular attention to how power is constructed, claimed and legitimised, and how this affects speaking rights in the team.

In line with Harré (2012, p. 194), we understand a position here as: "A cluster of short-term disputable rights, obligations, and duties". Positioning then consists of a process by which relevant traits like competence or trustworthiness are ascribed, and on which members' rights and obligations are then allocated (Harré, 2012). While most positioning theory research is not focused on small scale interactions as found in the data set here, the focus on rights and obligations that positioning theory emphasises seems to go well with other relational approaches in pragmatics, most notably Spencer-Oatey's (2008) rapport management framework.

Positionings can be verbalised in a range of ways; for example: 'These slides look great' might position the team member who has created them as the expert and thus lay the grounds for future responsibilities. Similarly, the person perceived to be particularly fluent in the working language may be positioned as 'THE native speaker' and be co-constructed as the person who needs to check all work before submission, as was the case in the team here, despite the fact that others could have also legitimately claimed this status. However, after such first order or pre-positionings, interlocutors can contest the allocated position, for example by making the positioning and their disagreement explicit (e.g. 'Don't treat me like a child!' or 'I am not the only native speaker in the team'), which Harré calls 'second order' positioning (Harré, 2012).

Positionings can be self- or other ascribed and are often done unintentionally, implicitly and simultaneously, with positions being fluid, multi-layered and ambiguous (van Langenhove and Harré, 1999). Positions occur within 'storylines', which can be understood both as unfolding interactional episodes and also as the interpretative frame interlocutors bring to the interaction. Individuals are likely to draw on different storylines as interpretative frames for the same interactions. If a team features a member who is particularly assertive, some team members in a storyline of not liking to be told what to do might accordingly position the person as 'bossy', whereas others might position them as 'highly involved'. The interpretation thus depends on the storylines, their associated moral orders, and the available positions and normative expectations considered to be in place. Positions are thus dynamic, emergent, and subject to negotiation over the course of an interactional episode.

At the same time positions are not available equally to interlocutors, as one needs power to allocate positionings to both self and others. These "powers are derived from specific locations in social orders and networks" (van Langenhove and Harré, 1999, p. 30). In a work team, social orders might develop through different aspects. It seems expertise or the ability to present oneself as an expert is likely to have a big impact. However, social and cultural capital as well as the ability to maintain rapport or negotiate well also seem likely to influence such social orders. Most importantly, however, successful positioning depends on an individual's willingness and intent to position themselves effectively and their mastery of the technique to do so (van Langenhove and Harré, 1999).

Yet van Langenhove and Harré (1999) do not clarify what this 'mastery' looks like, nor do they provide much detail on successful or less successful positioning strategies. Harré (2012) suggests, though, that "a great deal of local knowledge is required to act unhesitatingly and successfully in the various contexts that require positioning of oneself and others" (p. 202), and this could be a particular challenge in intercultural settings where local pragmatic knowledge is likely to be unevenly distributed.

Most positioning research to date has been conducted on narratives (e.g. Clifton, 2014), on short stretches of talk between two interlocutors (but see Hirvonen, 2013, 2016 for an exception) or on larger entities such as organisations or even states (Moghaddam et al., 2007). Research of the first two types has mostly focused on the importance of pronouns and the illocutionary force of speech acts (Davies and Harré, 1990; van Langenhove and Harré, 1999), yet we believe a positioning theory approach can provide valuable insights into long stretches of interactional discourse, especially in shedding light on how interlocutors allocate and negotiate their relationships and their positions in a given context. We therefore focus our analysis specifically on the positionings achieved over time in the team and on the ensuing distribution of speaking rights and obligations.

4. The data

The data was gathered as part of a single case study (Yin, 2014) of relationship management in intercultural teamwork. Team members were interviewed, and team meetings were observed and recorded leading to almost 100 h of recorded team interactions, of which 25 h were transcribed and form the basis of this article. Unequal participation and proficiency emerged as a crucial topic early on in that it was frequently discussed and pointed to as one of the biggest challenges team members reported they were facing in the teamwork.

Team members were undertaking an MBA at a UK university, for which project-based teamwork was a large mandatory component. Teams were assigned prior to the course by administrators to reflect functional, national, linguistic and gender diversity. Ethical approval for the research was granted by the relevant university committee and consent from the team to conduct this study was obtained during their first meeting, with the full support of the course leader. Team meetings were observed and recorded from then onwards until the day of their final presentation eight months later, thus spanning the entirety of this team's lifecycle.

The team's collaboration began with a team training session that also enabled members to get to know each other better. Additional team training and review sessions, guided by a facilitator, occurred regularly during the first three months and formed part of the curriculum. Over the course of 8 months, the team subsequently completed four separate projects, of which three consisted of consultancy work for external clients. Of these, project 2 (10h of team meetings) was transcribed in its entirety to allow for the analysis of all the stages in the completion of a task and other meetings (15h) were selected to be evenly spread out amongst other projects and across the whole teamwork.

Team members came from 5 different countries: UK (David), India (Jay & Akshya), Germany/Italy (Bruno), China (Alden) and Nigeria (Bev) (names are anonymised) and were aged between 26 and 39 years. All held a university degree and had a minimum of 5 years working experience, with most of them having experience of multinational teamwork in international workplaces. All of them had different functional expertise and had worked in different sectors including accounting, marketing, sales, and so forth. Bev, Akshya, David and Jay had received all their schooling in English and considered themselves as "native speakers", while Alden and Bruno acquired English later. Both were less fluent in the working language than their 4 fellow team members, with Bruno seeming slightly more proficient than Alden, based on the number of disfluencies regarding grammar, syntax and lexis. In addition, team members commented more on Alden's speech as being "accented", indicating that this was more salient with regard to Alden than Bruno. Both, however, had worked in an English-speaking environment for at least a year of their adult life and had acquired a score of at least 7 points in an IELTS exam, which was the minimum course requirement for the MBA they were participating in.

4.1. Data analysis

Team members were interviewed three weeks into the teamwork and again after the final project was completed. Interviews were coded inductively (Saldaña, 2016) according to themes participants raised in the interview. Language proficiency and participation were raised frequently by all participants as themes, often together, in and outside of the interviews. The same was true for the second interview. Most participants brought the topic up without prompting; however, more follow-up questions were asked as it was already established as an important area in the team. In some cases, participants were presented with quotes from the initial interviews and asked whether this perception still holds or how it has changed in the last months, thus prompting more elaborate comments on the issue.

To gain an overview of participation across the project as a whole, we first conducted some quantitative analyses including turn-frequency counts based on the transcripts of the chosen 25 h of team meetings. For these counts, backchannels were counted as individual turns, as well as overlaps and parallel talk as long as it could be distinguished on the recording. However, it should be noted that transcripts present talk in a linear fashion and are to some extent based on the interpretations of the analysts regarding what constitutes a turn especially where multiple speakers overlap. Therefore these frequency counts (shown in Section 5.1) should be treated as an indicative rather than a definitive representation of the talk occurring in team meetings. The transcripts were then coded to capture the activities that were performed by team members at different levels (e.g. 'decision-making' as a mezzo-category and 'disagreeing' as a micro-category) using MAXQDA software. Since we were particularly interested in how team members who were perceived as less proficient engaged with the team and were included by them, particular attention was paid to the interactions that Alden as the least proficient speaker was involved in. We decided to focus on Alden as especially his participation (or lack thereof) was regularly commented on by his team members. In particular we analysed how others engaged with him and how he was positioned by his team members. To

do this we have drawn on insights from conversation analysis to explore the unfolding organisation of interaction in the team under study. In this, we are particularly interested in how Alden engaged with and was responded to by his colleagues and which positions were allocated and made relevant.

While the literature highlights the fluidity of positions, we quickly got the sense that there was nonetheless a certain stability to the positionings in the team − something team members commented on themselves. Thus, while positions were of course contested and negotiated in interactions, larger, more stable positionings seemed to exist, limiting the range of strategies available to team members for contesting positionings, as well as the number of positions available to a team member. This was particularly obvious in regards to competence, as some team members were able to claim and occupy the position of 'expert' or 'competent team member' regardless of the topic, while for others this remained more precarious, even when they were dealing with projects within their area of subject expertise. The following sections provide evidence of this with regards to Alden, who continuously struggled to establish himself as a competent team member, even where he was highly knowledgeable of the subject matter.

5. Analysis and findings: Positioning speakers in multinational teams

5.1. Participation across the project

Chart 1 gives an overview of the proportion of turns taken by each team member over the course of the whole eight months of teamwork. While as analysts we do not agree that 'more vocal participation' necessarily equals 'better participation', low participation was regularly constructed as a problem by team members as we shall see below.
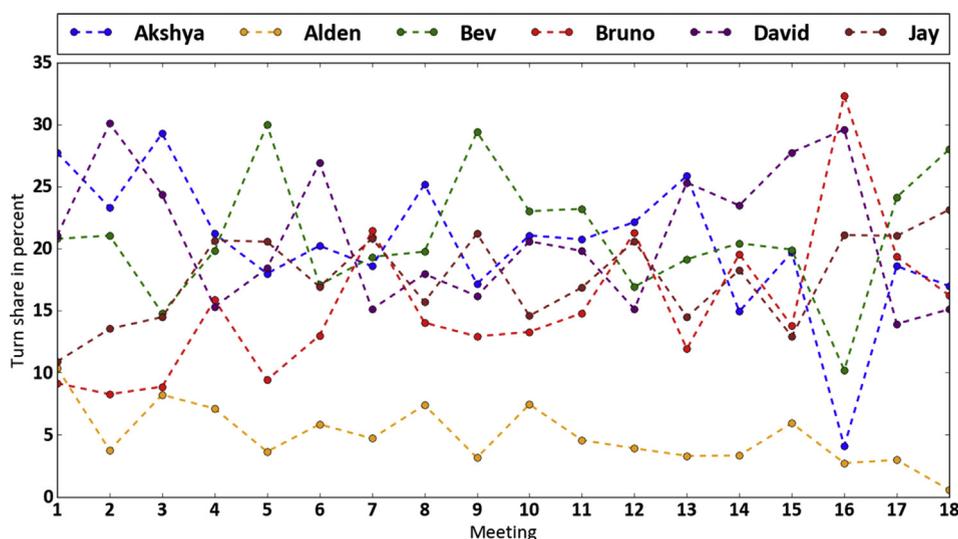

Chart 1. Overview of turn-taking in meetings (in chronological order. Particularly short meetings, or meetings in which not all members are present were excluded from the chart).

We can see that Alden takes proportionately far fewer turns than his fellow team members throughout the teamwork, with the figure decreasing even further towards the end. This is surprising because if it was only a language proficiency issue, we would not expect Alden's participation to go down, but to stay either roughly at the same level, or, even more likely, to go up as his English improved through the experience of working in the team. In addition, we can see a stark contrast with Bruno's trajectory (the other less proficient speaker of English). We will therefore argue in the next sections that this downwards trajectory and in fact the difference between Bruno's and Alden's trajectories cannot only be explained by language proficiency, but by the specific ways in which Alden was engaged with and positioned by his team. We suggest that they are the result of a gradual marginalisation of Alden by the team despite his efforts, leading to a vicious downwards spiral.

5.2. Initial positioning

The formal context pre-positioned team members in several ways even before they had the chance to interact. Course leaders explicitly positioned team members as equals: It was emphasised that they were all highly qualified and experienced. Teams were assembled to reflect diversity regarding their professional background, gender and nationality. While this was not made explicit by the institution, teams quickly commented on the logic behind team compositions. The decision to make

teams as diverse as possible tended to be framed by them as a mandate to learn from each other, but also as a challenge to learn how to deal with diversity — positioning each other both as a resource as well as a challenge.

For the first few interactions, the team seemed to mostly adhere to these larger category positionings. Of course, at the same time more local and fluid positions were also assigned, but the overarching storyline was one of equality, learning from the others and positioning oneself as a 'good team member'. This storyline, however, quickly became disrupted by issues around language proficiency and participation in the team meetings. While positioning occurred in many ways and based on a variety of characteristics, language proficiency seemed to occupy a particularly important place in this positioning game, having strong effects on the team's interactions. It was realised early on that Bruno and Alden had a lower language proficiency than their teammates and sometimes struggled with understanding and accessing the floor and that this affected their ability to participate actively in conversations. This in turn affected their ability to take ownership over specific tasks or to influence the direction of the projects towards their own expertise, thus further aggravating the situation, a challenge previously observed in other studies (e.g. Tenzer et al., 2014).

5.3. Positioning as silent

Alden and Bruno's low level of participation was felt by their teammates early on and was explicitly commented on in a team review session with their facilitator:

Extract 1: Review Session, end of 2nd month of teamwork

82	John (Facilitator):	Other insights that people want to sha:re?
83	Jay:	u[:m
84	Akshya:	[Alden Bruno
85	Bev:	Yeah/ they never talk Alden Bruno=
86	Bruno:	=They never talk h that's not true h
87		((laughter))

In line 84 Akshya responds to John's question by stating two names. Since this is in a facilitated group discussion with the aim of reviewing teamwork processes to improve the teamwork, Akshya's nomination must refer to some form of teamwork problem otherwise it would not be relevant in this particular interaction. While she might be nominating either Bruno or Alden for the next turn, Bev speaks first making the problem surrounding the two explicit by stating "they never talk". Her utterance concludes with repeating Alden's and Bruno's names. Neither of them includes an 'and' between the names, marking Bev's utterance clearly as a repeat as we ordinarily could expect the names to be linked in this way. Her utterance functions to further confirm the allusion of Alden and Bruno as a problem, only hinted at by Akshya (Schegloff, 1996), while also attributing the problem to Alden and Bruno explicitly, instead of framing it as a communal or interactional problem with shared responsibilities.

Bruno manages to contradict this explicit positioning as 'never talking' by immediately taking the floor, causing laughter in the group, which also serves to alleviate potential tensions. In the ensuing conversation (not included for reasons of space) first Bruno and then Alden try to re-frame the problem as pertaining to the group and their lack of ability to participate as a direct consequence of the others often speaking too fast, using slang terms and not taking the time to listen or explain things properly, especially when discussions become heated. Thus, they try to re-position themselves not as unwilling to participate or as excluded solely by their own language knowledge, but as a function of the interactional dynamics present in the group that tends to exclude them.

This positioning as silent also raises expectations for the two not to speak, which can then contribute to them being ignored in turn-allocation. Alden picks this up later in the same review-session and explicitly attempts to contest the position as a silent member who chooses not to speak by stating:

Extract 2: Review Session, end of 2nd month of teamwork

Alden: Because I want understand what you talk about/ so I'm quiet/ but I realised the second week/ the third week I/ I felt m:h better/ and I felt u:h comfortable/ and I felt a little bit confident/ I/ I would like to share my opinion/ but situation is/ people maybe like uh firming something (.) like they ignore you/ because before that you didn't build or create relationship in this group when you talk/ but people can't realise that some situation has changed/ people don't like to be patient to listen what you want to talk about

Alden first provides a rationale for his initial silence and then positions himself as somebody becoming more confident and comfortable, wanting to share his opinion. In this extract he notably does not draw on language proficiency as an explanatory variable for his silence and thus implicitly contests the claim frequently made by his fellow team members that he is linguistically deficient. He is actively contesting the consequences of a positioning through which he seems to have already lost his right to speak, while the others have gained a right to ignore him. He directly refers to the expectation of silence and thus makes the team's positioning explicit. He contests this partly by shifting the blame and partly by drawing on some of the difficulty he faces with people being impatient. While this occurs in the early stages of the teamwork, Alden already points out how difficult it is for him to contest this implicit positioning, leaving him only with

the option of making the 'unfair' position he has been awarded obvious through an attempt at an explicit second-order positioning.

As we saw above, Alden was not alone in his initial position as 'the silent member', yet unlike Alden, Bruno was able to contest and overcome it successfully. Reasons of space do not allow us to report the details of how Bruno achieved this. In this paper we focus on the positioning practices that seem to have been reserved solely for Alden and that, taken together, shed insights into the overall position he was allocated and the effect this had on team interactions.

5.4. Positioning as different

Quite early in the team meetings Alden is explicitly positioned as 'different', as the following extract illustrates. This exchange comes at the end of a long conversation about Alden. During a review session, each team member had to draw and present an image of how they see themselves, that was then discussed by the team. The facilitator is present, though the team is given a lot of freedom in how to run these discussions.

Extract 3: 2nd month of team meetings, reflection round with facilitator

Bev:	I feel like I /I personally feel like I have not met the real Alden or uhm that's how I (.) I feel like I need to keep on dragging something out of him to eventually get there
Bruno:	Ahm just just I spent the last three days working with Alden on this PARTS model/ I guess that you are making a huge fuss about Alden/ I mean for me he is a/ if you/ no I'm serious/ if you really spend a couple of days with this guy/ he is a guy like you like me like like all of us/ not more not less [....] it's not I mean he is not a strange creature or/

In this exchange and the turns prior to the included extract, Bev repeatedly positioned Alden as somebody she has not got to know yet. Bruno picks up on this positioning, commenting that she is making a "huge fuss" and that Alden is "a guy like you like me", thus coming to Alden's defence with a second-order positioning of Alden as 'normal' that counteracts Bev's positioning of Alden as 'different'. While Bev never uses those words, Bruno captures the way she has described Alden over many turns by stating "he is not a strange creature". The sheer fact that this has to be said points to the perception that at least some team members hold of him — that he is markedly different. This segment also shows how positions are negotiated in the team. Alden is present during this exchange but he gets mostly talked about instead of talked with, effectively excluding him from the interaction and thus from contesting the positions others seem to allocate him.

5.5. Marginalisation through team meeting dynamics

After shedding light on the two positionings of Alden as silent and different that emerged early in the teamwork, in this section we will trace how these positionings impacted and were continuously constructed in more task-focused discussions in the middle stages of the teamwork. For this we focused on project 2, which was transcribed in its entirety. Alden takes only slightly more than 400 turns throughout this project (4% of the overall turns). Around one fifth of these turns consist of only one or two-word agreements, which is not notably different from the quantity of other people's agreements. Some of the other exchanges are also not that illuminating as they consist of quite common adjacency pairs, like question-answer, or greeting-return-greeting.

When looking at the more complex interactional activities like decision-making, or giving suggestions or feedback, an interesting picture begins to emerge, however. In these categories, unsuccessful interactions seem to happen with an alarming frequency, with Alden's turns often being: 1) over-talked or interrupted, 2) his contributions being dismissed outright or 3) contributions being treated with only token interest. Interestingly though, there is not a single incident where the syntactic correctness or even the pragmatics of language-use seem to be the problem in these interactions. We provide examples and more details on each of these categories in the following sections.

5.5.1. Lost utterances, over-talking or interrupting

Alden's contributions frequently fail to make an impact as they are often not heard or are lost in the interaction, because others interrupt him or talk over him. These issues happen to all team members on occasion and are not unique to Alden; however, they affect him significantly more, given his overall smaller number of turns. In addition, all team members are aware that Alden talks comparatively little and most are upset about this, yet this does not seem to lead to them yielding the floor faster, paying more attention or making his access easier. Extract 4 illustrates this.

Extract 4: 5th meeting Project 2, 3rd month of teamwork

1825	Alden:	But I think it's the focus on the [customer what the customer think of {client} it's kind of like the
1826	Jay:	[CAN WE can we put the the other picture where the whole restaurant is there?
1827	Alden:	[{client}'s restaurant we can't to change them to the to the bar=
1828	Jay:	[other picture where the whole restaurant is there?
1829	David:	= test two [test two
1830	Akshya:	[yeah that's actually true yeah=
1831	Alden:	= yeah?
1832	Bev:	does anybody want anything?

This extract is part of a longer discussion about the changes the team will propose to its client. Alden is disagreeing with previous suggestions, thus positioning himself as somebody who has the right to disagree. The others' responses, however, challenge this right. While Alden is talking, Jay is overlapping him for almost the entire time. Jay seems to be talking to the person in charge of the meeting room's computer, and his request is likely to facilitate the workflow, but he is speaking loud enough to make it harder for the others to listen to Alden, thus positioning himself as not having the duty to listen as he prioritises his request to see "the other picture" (line 1826). The next overlap then comes from David who is playing with one of the recording devices used for recording their presentation, recording himself saying "test two" — which positions him even more strongly than Jay as not having an obligation to listen to Alden, as his utterance is not even focused on the task. This leaves Akshya as the only person out of five who seems to listen and who also validates Alden's point by stating "that's actually true yeah" (line 1830). After this, Bev completely changes the topic by asking whether somebody wants a drink and, without any real engagement, Alden's comments are discarded.

We can also note that the turn-taking in this section does not seem to follow normal turn-taking rules. Overlaps cannot be considered brief, nor do they occur at transition-relevance places, which we would expect in a normal turn-taking pattern as outlined in Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson's (1974) seminal paper. The degree of interruptions and overtalking in this short segment is however striking and as Hollander and Abelson (2016, p. 192) put it: "Violations of turn-taking rules such as interruptions, indicate a disruption of the conversational order." Yet neither within this segment, nor in the lines before, can we find an indication why the conversational order should be disrupted, apart from the fact that Alden is the one who is speaking, which suggests that the others do not follow 'normal' turn-taking rules with him. This behaviour seems to reflect Alden's positioning as somewhat 'different' from the group more broadly.

5.5.2. Dismissing contributions

Another recurring response to Alden's contributions is a dismissal without any real form of consideration. In Extract 5, Alden makes a suggestion (line 1068) "do we need to find a James?". While this might sound strange to an outsider (James is somebody they met at their first client organisation), its meaning is understood by the team.

Extract 5: 5th meeting Project 2, 3rd month of teamwork

1067	Bev:	I think it it just seems/ it's good but there's no story/ people get captivated by a story they need to get one/ if I was to take one thing from this entire presentation what would that be?
1068	Alden:	Do we need to find a James? In the {client}
1069	Bev:	Oh please/ go awa:y
1070	Alden:	hhh yeah?
1071	Akshya:	I know I get what you're saying/ like one thing that ties everything together/ like say we are dealing with an organisation th[at is
1072	Bev:	[that is this or that or that=
1073	Jay:	= mhm

In this extract Alden makes a suggestion in line 1068 as to how they could address a problem raised by Bev in line 1067. Stevanovic (2015, p.86) refers to such instances as proximal deontic claims which "are about people's rights to initiate, maintain, or close up local sequences of conversational action." Alden claims the right to do just this when he proposes a course of action and a solution to the problem posed by Bev. Bev's response, however, challenges Alden's right to do so. She dismisses Alden's suggestion immediately in a way that does not engage with his suggestion but could be seen as personally offensive (line 1069). Her tone suggests that she might be joking and Alden responds with something of a laugh (line 1070) but it seems more likely to be a face-saving strategy than a genuine laugh. More importantly it does not challenge her right to speak to him in this way.

Even more telling is however Bev's change in behaviour in turn 1072, after Akshya validates Alden's suggestion as legitimate and worthy of consideration (line 1071). Bev now shifts from "oh please go away" (1069) to actually aligning with Akshya and supporting her in completing her utterance (1072) indicating her sudden approval of the suggestion.

While team members of course change their minds over the course of a discussion, it rarely happens so quickly. As such, Bev's response to the suggestions seems very much dependent on the person who voices it, which in the case of Alden leads to an immediate dismissal yet when the same suggestion is revoiced by Akshya receives consideration and approval. Bev thus directly challenges rights here that could be seen as essential in teamwork: the rights to make suggestions and to influence the project. Stevanovic (2015) observed from her data, which consisted of much more benign dismissals of ideas than the one here, that interlocutors after having their proximal deontic claims challenged outright, ceased to make suggestions for the remainder of the interaction. It seems likely that such a dynamic also contributes to the silence of Alden in the interactions recorded here.

5.5.3. Token interest

The final category, 'token interest' is similar to the previous category in that both end with the dismissal of a contribution. Extract 6 begins with Akshya summarising a decision that has just been reached, to focus on "positioning and analysis" in their presentation (line 848). Bev then addresses Alden directly, questioning whether he had been following the decision. Alden is the only one in the team who gets addressed in this way and the only one whose understanding is checked, which thus perpetuates his positioning as 'different' but also in need of more attention and not as a fully-competent team member.

Interestingly, several team members commented in the interviews that Alden usually responds to questions by only saying 'yes' or 'I agree' and does not actually have anything meaningful to say. Yet the data reveals several instances where this is not the case, such as in this segment.

Extract 6: 3rd meeting Project 2, 3rd month of teamwork

848	Akshya:	positioning and analysis
849	Bev:	ALDEN (.) we're on the same page?
850	Alden:	yes, actually in terms of (you mentioned) the positioning/ we can use the 4Vs=
851	Bev:	= uhu.
852	Alden:	And the layout process=
853	Bev:	= <<uhu::?>>
854	Alden:	decide process technology and then last thing is design jobs so all
		things about po=
855	Bev:	= that's for positioning?
856	Alden:	exactly yeah
857	David:	we can still use the performance objectives inside positioning
858	Jay:	yeah
859	Bev:	we [have
860	Bruno:	[we have to actually I mean that's
861	Bev:	we can make this in here that's no problem

In this extract Alden uses the turn Bev allocated to him to make suggestions regarding the structure they could follow within their focus on positioning (note that positioning here refers to an operations management framework). While Bev seemingly supports his utterance by backchanneling in line 851 and 853, her backchannel here stands out, because not a single other incident of her performing two backchannels during one turn of a fellow team member could be found in the whole data set. In fact, most of her verbal backchanneling behaviour is also not done with 'uhu' but usually consists of words like 'yes' or 'exactly'. Her intonation pattern also stands out as (especially on the second "uhu"): it is slowed down and the falling intonation (on the first) and rising intonation (on the second) sound somewhat exaggerated. It marks another incident where Alden is engaged with in a way that seems solely reserved for him, mirroring and at the same time constructing his difference and distinctiveness from the rest of the group, while generating the impression that Bev is not necessarily actually listening intently, but instead seems to be engaged with performing the role of a listener. In line 855 she cuts him off by asking a question, again making her superficially seem interested, but her question has nothing to do with the content of what Alden is saying but is checking the general topic he is addressing, and thus fails to properly engage with it. David then enters the conversation in line 857 and changes the topic, drawing on an issue (performance objectives) that the team discussed earlier. This is very symptomatic of the types of interactions David and Alden have: David is silent in most interactions Alden is involved in, he hardly addresses Alden, nor does he respond directly to anything Alden says or engages with the topic. This positions him as 'not even needing to bother' with anything Alden has to say. He rather quickly and smoothly brings any interaction with Alden's points to an end here and essentially silences his contributions, as well as Alden's ability to gain 'real' entrance to the interactional space, for longer than a very short number of turns. This contrasts with Bev, who seems to feel an obligation to engage Alden (thus positioning him as needing extra-support and attention) even if she does not take his contributions up in the end.

Interestingly Alden's non-verbal contributions tend to be treated in a similar fashion. In his final interview, Alden reports that tasks he worked on the whole night simply get deleted from their final document in the morning and the team meeting data shows evidence of how Alden is passed over in task allocations, especially when it comes to important tasks. While this mirrors a lack of trust in his abilities on the one hand (Tenzer et al., 2014), it also highlights again how language proficiency does not seem to be the only factor affecting participation. Alden does not need to compete for turns when doing written work and the samples of his written work that we have seen did not suffer from many lexical or grammatical errors. Regarding both his written and verbal contributions he states in the end "I can't fit in because my point is always always ignored or challenged/ So I don't have the motivation to this job". This eventually leads to his participation and contributions going down even further after the project that we have analysed here, which in turn seems to validate his teammates' developing perception of him as being even more passive, different, less competent and possibly disinterested.

5.6. Positioning as incompetent (language speaker)

From early on Alden's English language ability was framed as insufficient to participate in the teamwork. However, what seems surprising is how long-lived this positioning was, enduring even while his English improved. Alden himself reported that he has not encountered these same problems in some of the other teams he worked in towards the end of their degree, as he aimed to establish himself differently from very early on. Extract 7 stems from the final month of the teamwork and shows an extreme case of how this perception manifested in interactions.

Extract 7: 4th Project 2nd Meeting, before this extract the team has decided when to meet next and then discussed the deadlines. David is the elected task master for this project. Jay is absent due to sickness so only 5 team members are present.

1533	Bev:	Are we done?
1534	Bruno:	This is a pain in the ass, this project
1535	David:	Right, Alden?
1536	Alden:	Yeah
1537	David:	Do you understand when we're meeting next?
1538	Akshya:	Yes, he is
1539	David:	When are we meeting next?
1540	Akshya:	Come on::
1541	Alden:	Just like=
1542	David:	= No Alden, when are we meeting next. Tell me when we are meeting next?
1543	Bev:	Okay.
1544	David:	Tell me when we are meeting next
1545	Bev:	David stop
1546	Bruno:	Yeah
1547	Alden:	I don't know
1548	David:	Right, so you DON'T understand when we're meeting next
1549	Bev:	11th February
1550	Alden:	But you will post our schedule, right?

Before officially ending the meeting, David questions Alden about when they are meeting next. This direct line of questioning is not typical for the team and we can see how all other team members interfere and try to stop David from proceeding. The topic had changed away from the next meeting date a few turns earlier, thus this conversation does not follow on from the immediate discussion and seems almost random. David's repeated questioning "Do you understand when we're meeting next?" (line 1537), "When are we meeting next?"' (line 1539), "No, Alden, when are we meeting next. Tell me when we are meeting next?" (line 1542) and "Tell me when we are meeting next" (line 1544) is extremely face threatening and comes close to bullying, a perception which his teammates seem to share as they repeatedly tell David to stop, which he ignores until Alden admits to not knowing the answer (line 1547). In response, David does not produce the missing information but states explicitly "Right, so you DON'T understand when we are meeting next", which sounds like he is gloating and was hoping for this outcome. David clearly controls the floor here, ignoring other team member interference and cutting Alden off in line 1542 when he perceives his answer to be insufficient to answer his question. David does not actually seem worried that Alden might miss a meeting though, as he does not produce the missing information until the end. Instead Alden is singled out and exposed for not having understood, his failure to understand becoming a moral issue with which he has somehow failed the team.

In a study into diverse workplaces in the UK Celia Roberts and her colleagues (Roberts et al., 1992) found similar incidents, in which British managers spoke to their migrant workers in ways they would never have used to speak with British employees or their peers, which they explained with a stereotypical perspective that was reserved solely for staff perceived to be different. David's line of questioning seems to establish Alden as just that here: somebody who is inept and incapable of understanding and thus needs to be spoken to like a child.

When discussing language challenges in the final interview Alden himself commented:

Alden: I don't know before the MBA I didn't think my English is quite rubbish but when I came here I think English is like a new language I learn (.) I can't understand and I can't describe some situations I can't discuss something

and:

Alden: To be honest I don't think that language is a barrier in groupwork/ but in reality in our group yeah it is/ it was

In both quotes Alden suggests that what has happened in the team was not an inevitable outcome of his language proficiency but was in fact constructed as a problem by the way communication was handled in the team. He himself refers to the very fast pace of the discussions, that especially initially were very challenging to follow. This was probably exacerbated by tasks and course content that was more accessible to team members who were highly familiar with the UK educational system and who could draw on lots of local knowledge to interpret course content and information faster. Such slower uptake here seems to have been confused with language ability. As we saw in Extract 2 right at the beginning of the teamwork, Alden already felt like others reacted with impatience to him trying to explain things, which created an environment where such things matter a great deal. It should be noted that while Extract 7 depicts a particularly extreme case, such behavioural assumptions underpin many interactions and become increasingly tangible, albeit still implicit.

5.7. Positioning as an outsider

One final frequent interactional pattern in the team is to talk about Alden in the 3rd person as if he was not in the room. This seems to position him as an outsider. We saw this to an extent in Extract 3 above, yet this is not an isolated incident; rather it happens regularly throughout the team meetings. Extract 8 provides another example where this occurs.

Extract 8: 2nd Meeting Project 4, 7th month of teamwork

514	Alden:	You know/ if I do this uh/ this case by myself/ I think yeah I would like help compare to the/ compare to the competitor/ how to improve or increase the impact=
515	Bev:	= of your products
516	Alden:	I'd try some more new funders/ reach more people and how to measure the impact in the future/ rather than now just 'this is a questionnaire'/ 'this is a report'/ ((overlapping laughter)) 'you guys you don't have social media'
517	Bev:	[I get your point
518	Alden:	[That's designed this stuff, we are MBA's, [I'm not saying we
519	Bev:	[I
520	Alden:	We can't do this, but I'm saying we need to think about something you know like an operation finance strategy here
519	Bev:	I understand (.) but that's/ my/ that's where I want you to see that that's not what the client wants from us
520	Akshya:	No/ uhm one moment/ apart from just the cosmetic change of the report we have to put our thoughts from how do we collect data/ I mean we have to work on the finances/ we have to look at is it/ they have manual data now/ Okay? What is the kind of technology that we can propose?/ what/ how can we smartly you know simplify the questionnaire?=
521	Alden:	= Yeah
522	Akshya:	How can we bring in online in involvement of their uh alumni and your/ so we are looking at those things/ by report I mean that's just one part of it/ [We should really
523	Alden:	[So I think so for [me
524	Bev:	[For me I don't think you're getting/ I think he's saying/ what he's saying is the content of the program is what we should be looking at, not questionnaires
525	Bruno:	No [no what he
526	Akshya:	[No, no, what he's saying is most of that they can get an external agency/ pay £200 for somebody to do something and then somebody has something/ our value add is not as an MBA

At the beginning of this segment Alden is outlining his concerns about the approach the team has chosen for their current project, which he thinks is too simplistic. He makes some alternative suggestions including "compare to competitor" (line 514) and '"try some new funders and reach more people" (line 516). Nonetheless, after some debate about the issue Alden raised, Bev in line 524 expresses doubts in her understanding of what Alden has suggested by stating "I think he's saying". Instead of asking Alden directly what he was saying, Bev, Bruno and Akshya continue to interrupt and overlap each other with interpretations of what he meant (lines 524—526) as if he was not in the room.

What he is saying, however, does not seem to be that difficult to understand (especially not to the team familiar with their own work), yet for some reason there seems to be the assumption that what Alden says needs to be explained, seemingly reflecting a general attitude towards Alden's contributions as difficult to make sense of. Eventually team members decide that his suggestions are "out of their scope" and dismiss his objections to their current approach. Nevertheless, over the course of the task several team members revisit the point and start to question whether their own approach is indeed too simplistic.

Of course, other subtler positionings occur and many more that are only valid in the immediate vicinity of the positioning. We have focused here only on the more stable positionings that seem to be valid for large parts of the teamwork and that seem to strongly restrict Alden's abilities to (re-)position himself. We will now explore why these positionings matter, by exploring in more depth how they affect interactions and are at the same time subtly reinforced.

6. Discussion

The analysis above has shed light on the positionings that can occur in teams and on the unequal distribution of power in a seemingly equal team. Alden was positioned as lacking in a number of ways. He was positioned as silent, as different, as an incompetent language speaker and thus as an incompetent team member, and finally, as not a real team member at all, but as somebody the team had to carry around with them. Whenever he tried to contest these positionings by speaking up and trying to influence the direction of the projects, he was marginalised by being ignored, treated with token interest or by being dismissed outright.

What came out strongly in our analysis of the data is how entangled these positionings are with each other. Together they seem to have formed a trap which becomes almost impossible to counteract as the positioning mutually construct and re-enforce each other. While Alden repeatedly tries to counteract them, he has very few options, as every instance of him complying with these positionings is seen as further evidence in support of them. These positionings seem widely shared among all team members, though David seems to hold them in a more severe fashion.

The only exception might be Akshya who seems much more reflective and points out in her final interview that this was not only Alden's fault but that the team was reluctant to give him work and consistently underestimated the quality of his contributions. She also does not seem to find it difficult to understand Alden and assesses his contributions more objectively, and regularly explains his points to the others. This makes it more puzzling why the others seem unable to understand what he is trying to convey, apart from a belief that seems to develop early on that Alden is difficult to understand and to deal with.

What is also interesting is the striking difference in trajectories between Alden and Bruno. It is true that Bruno's English is slightly better than Alden's, yet even in the beginning when both were struggling, Bruno was not positioned in the same way as Alden. For example, in the same meeting Extract 1 comes from, Bev claims that Bruno is often silent because "he takes the time to think properly" instead of framing it purely as a language problem. Bruno's suggestions are also not dismissed in the same way as Alden's are. Thus, despite a similar initial problem with the working language and a comparable initial

positioning, there seem to be some fundamental differences between the two, with Bruno not getting positioned as 'different' and not as 'difficult' in the same way.

Some of the positionings in place for Alden seem, in fact, to be related to attributions others make about his cultural identity, which is not the case for Bruno. Team members sometimes used his nationality as an explanation for his behaviour, stating "I know he is from a shy culture but ((sigh))" while he was not in the room, or joking with him that he was "really Chinese". Here they may be following common stereotypes of Chinese students as more silent, less competent and more problematic for teams (e.g. Turner, 2009). This mirrors Roberts et al.'s (1992) findings regarding the different ways managers talked to migrant workers than to British workers, which she related to linguistic forms of discrimination and seem to be a reflection of the speaker's stereotypes.

These perceptions might be sparked at least in part by non-proficient language and (in the case of Alden) accented speech, which has been shown to trigger stereotyping and out-group frames in listeners (Gluszek and Dovidio, 2010). Social psychology research (e.g. Fuertes et al., 2012; Hui and Cheng, 1987) indicates that non-proficient and accented speakers are judged as less intelligent, competent, attractive, benevolent, and trustworthy as well as less lively, enthusiastic and talkative than more proficient speakers, with levels of negative evaluations being particularly high in employment and educational settings. This all suggests that it is an uphill battle for less proficient speakers, especially if they can be positioned according to cultural stereotypes and do not naturally contradict such outgroup and stereotyped perceptions. This seems to have been the case with Alden, who also commented that he tended to be rather introverted.

With regards to Alden's positioning in the team, it seems that a number of factors came together to make the positioning of him more permanent and ended up marginalising him. His lower proficiency was very visible in a team full of fluent speakers and was often taken as the reason to explain his behaviour, but also as an excuse not to engage with him. This may have been supported by implicit stereotypes and associated negative evaluations which contributed to perceptions of him as less competent, less engaged (Fuertes et al., 2012; Hui and Cheng, 1987), less understandable (Lindemann, 2002; Rubin, 1992) and less credible (Lev-Ari and Keysar, 2010). These factors also contributed to his inability to counteract this positioning and effectively reposition himself.

In summary, we thus suggest that four factors (language proficiency, stereotypes, repetition and an inability to resist and reposition himself) contributed to Alden's marginalisation. The positionings he was allocated became so interconnected and entrenched over time that they formed their own storyline against which Alden's behaviour was repeatedly evaluated until he was unable to refute the positioning anymore and the only way left open for him was to stay silent.

While we have mostly followed Alden in this article, there is of course a counter-narrative of five people who for the most part were keen to engage their fellow teammate but remained unsuccessful and became increasingly frustrated without realising what prevented them from effectively addressing the issue, ultimately leading to an assignation of blame mostly towards Alden.

7. Conclusion

The article set out to explore how relations in a linguistically diverse team are managed and specifically how less proficient speakers are engaged with by their more fluent peers (research questions 1 & 2).

We have shown how positioning processes can contribute to team relations and especially participation problems in intercultural teams with different proficiency levels. We have argued that while some of these problems might be based on issues of understanding and accessing the floor, these are not inevitable and are aggravated by positioning the least proficient member as difficult, silent, incompetent, and so different that he is impossible to work with. His attempts to access the floor and influence the teamwork are cut short by interruptions, dismissals and only token interest which thereby inhibit his attempts at re-positioning. These interactional dynamics gradually lead to an increased silencing of the least proficient team member.

Other factors seem to have exacerbated these processes (research question 3). These include most notably the cultural stereotypes that team members seem to hold against Alden. These were occasionally verbalised to "explain" his behaviour, but are also evidenced by the way team members interacted with him, which as Roberts et al. (1992) have shown seems to be an interactional style reserved for outgroup members. The repetition of these positionings and an inability to resist and reposition himself further contributed to the entrenchment of these perceptions and to Alden's marginalisation in the team.

In this article we have thus provided new insights into team processes especially with regards to language proficiency and the possible effects of cultural stereotypes. These insights are needed if teams are to be helped to function more effectively. In the team here, team members were at a loss to understand why participation was so imbalanced and continuously struggled to find ways of improving the situation. Understanding how members are included or excluded in the communication of a diverse team can be used to raise awareness and ultimately to build better and more equal relationships in teams.

In addition, we have also contributed to positioning theory by fleshing out how positionings are constructed and shared in multi-party interactions and across time. Finally, we have made a contribution by drawing together factors that influence how people position others in teams.

7.1. Implications & limitations

Some of the previous studies that have found language proficiency problems in the workplace (e.g. Barner-Rasmussen and Björkman, 2007) have suggested addressing the issue by raising language fluency. However, the findings of this study indicate

that the picture is more complicated. In line with Tenzer et al.'s (2014) study, we have found that the perception of language proficiency played a much bigger role than language proficiency itself. These issues, however, are the result of complex language attitudes and ideologies – often by highly fluent speakers, that cannot be addressed by improving the English skill of one of their teammates. Deeper level measures, including companies' language policies and broader political discourses, seem necessary to change the way language is viewed and treated. Experimental studies in social psychology on the perceptions of accents have shown that awareness raising of these phenomena can at least somewhat counteract negative evaluations (Lev-Ari and Keysar, 2010), making awareness raising a more important tool than additional English classes. Recent research has similarly suggested that the positioning of the speaker and the ascription of 'ownership' of English influences participation and speaking up significantly more than language proficiency does (Lin, 2017), supporting our view that company policy and discourse about language skill can have a major influence on individual participation.

The study has several limitations, most obviously the fact that it only draws on a single case. Our purpose was to gain a deep understanding of the dynamics in a team, and while the findings seem to mirror and extend the existing literature, further studies on the issue with a broader dataset are needed. In addition, since we have relied solely on audio recordings it was also not possible to analyse Alden's interactional behaviour outside of the episodes he verbally participated in, nor the nonverbal interaction by his teammates towards him. Future studies should include such a perspective for a more nuanced understanding.

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None.

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Appendix

Transcription key

Symbol	Meaning
/	Intonation unit boundary
[	Overlapping talk
.	Falling intonation
?	Rising intonation
:	Lengthened sound
(.)	Short pause, below 1 s
=	Unit of pause follows another with no discernible interval
[….]	Section of talk omitted
CAPS	Louder voice
((laughter))	Several/all team members jointly laugh
hh	Individual laughter
(xxx)	Utterance/words not understood
(word)	Best guess at word
<< >>	Notably slower talk than surrounding talk
{project2}	Anonymised word

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